

In the Claims:

Claims 1-7 (Canceled).

8. A preparation of dendritic cells having at least two cell surface markers selected from the group consisting of CD1a, HLA-DR and CD86, produced by contacting hematopoietic stem or progenitor cells with IL-18.
9. A dendritic cell preparation according to claim 8 produced further by contacting the hematopoietic stem or progenitor cells with a molecule selected from the group consisting of flt3-ligand, GM-CSF, IL-4, TNF- α , IL-3, c-kit ligand, and fusions of GM-CSF and IL-3.
10. An antigen-expressing dendritic cell population produced by the process of (a) contacting hematopoietic stem or progenitor cells with IL-18 in an amount sufficient to generate a dendritic cell population; (b) either (i) exposing the dendritic cells to an antigen-specific peptide or (ii) transfecting the dendritic cells with a gene encoding an antigen-specific peptide; (c) allowing the dendritic cells to process and express the antigen; and (d) purifying the antigen-expressing dendritic cells.
11. A dendritic cell population according to claim 10 wherein step (a) of the process further comprises contacting the hematopoietic stem or progenitor cells with a molecule selected from the group consisting of GM-CSF, IL-4, TNF- α , IL-3, c-kit ligand, and fusions of GM-CSF and IL-3.

Claims 12-19 (Canceled).